

- Consider reading **Luke** once each month in 2021 and journaling (journals are available @ The Connection Corner, suggested donation, \$4).

If you have any questions,
please reach out to us and let us serve you
(417-682-2118 or office@fcclamar.org).
Thank you!

Upcoming Weeks

*We're a **JESUS** Church!* A Red-Letter Year — Gospel of Luke **Jesus — Compassionate Friend**

March 21	<i>He's a Friend of the Guilty</i> — 7:36-50
March 28	<i>He's a Friend of the Lost</i> — 8:1-21
April 4	<i>He's a Friend of the Anxious</i> — 8:22-39; 12:22-32
April 11	<i>He's a Friend of the Desperate</i> — 8:26-56
April 18	<i>He's a Friend Who Guides Us</i> — 9:1-11

Invite a friend to join you!
It could be a day they'll remember for eternity!

FCC Lamar - Mar. 14, 2021

Jesus — Compassionate Friend # 2 *He's Our Friend When We Doubt* **Luke 7:18-35**

There are things that can be *good*, or it can be *bad*.

Like a net, *doubt* can be a safety net to catch you if you fall.

Like a net, *doubt* can ensnare you and devour you.

Doubt is not necessarily a bad thing...if it drives you to study, and pray, and to keep on worshiping, and keep on seeking, and keep on growing...then it may very well be the Net that you need to pull you to safety.

It may be the very thing that drives you to discovery... the very thing that fans-into-flame the tiny spark of faith in your heart.

But be warned...Doubt can also extinguish that spark....Doubt can fester and grow in your heart, and over time, you'll become so hardened to the things of God that you don't have any room left for faith....The Net will entrap you, not rescue you....That choice...is up to you.

Jesus loves doubters.

What do you do when doubt gets a foothold in your life?

John the Baptist went looking for answers.... He simply went to the source and asked, "*Are you the promised Savior?*"

Look at Jesus' response in **v. 22**,

"He replied to the messengers, 'Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. ²³Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.' ... Jesus didn't say Yes or No.

Instead, Jesus told John to weigh the evidence for Himself.

1. The _____:
2. Jesus also told John about the Resurrection of the _____.
3. The Good News Preached to the _____.
4. Fulfilled _____ also lends credibility to our faith.

Jesus was referencing two fulfilled prophecies: **Isaiah 35:4-6a** and **Isaiah 61**

Application

Faith is a _____ decision.

Christianity is not a _____ leap into complete and total darkness.

You don't have to turn your _____ off to believe in God....there's plenty of evidence to support what we believe.

It's a _____ based on trust.

*“There are three ways of approaching God.
The first is 'Belief.'
The second is 'Doubt.'
The third is 'Unbelief.'
Now belief and unbelief are choices that we make.
Doubt on the other hand is an honest expression,
it's an act of integrity.”*
Fred Smith

It's doubt—that honest expression of uncertainty—that leads us to choose either *Belief* or *Unbelief*.

That's why we have to do what John the Baptist did:

We address our doubts so we can resolve them . . .

**Honest doubt _____ us to
make an informed choice.**

Don't _____ from your doubts, let them propel you to learn and grow.

Conclusion

“Something about Jesus made people leave their jobs and families and follow Him around the hills and plains of Palestine. Something about Jesus attracts the allegiance of one-third of the people on this planet today. ... Something about Jesus convinced His followers that He is the human expression of the invisible God....In other words: If you want to know what God is like, look at Jesus. His combination of qualities—fierceness and yet compassion, absolute confidence and yet humility, brilliance and yet simplicity—I find those qualities in no other human being. For me, Jesus is trustworthy.”

Philip Yancey

“Eighty and six years I have served Him, and He has done me no wrong. How then can I curse my King and Savior?”

Polycarp

Polycarp lived...and he died...a man of faith.

A decision like that isn't based on blind trust.

***Honest doubt propels us
to make an informed choice.***

We all make choices about faith. **John Ortberg** writes:

“...making the right choices about faith — like making good choices for life in general — does not seem to rest primarily on IQ. Smart people mess up as easily as the rest of us.

“Three men are in a plane: a pilot, a Boy Scout, and the world’s smartest man. The engine fails, the plane is going down, and there are only two parachutes. The smart man grabs one. “I’m sorry about this,” he says, “but I’m the smartest man in the world; I have a responsibility to the planet,” and he jumps out of the plane. The pilot turns to the Boy Scout and speaks of how he has lived a long, full life and how the Boy Scout has his whole life in front of him. He tells the Boy Scout to take the last parachute and live. “Relax, Captain,” the Boy Scout says. “The world’s smartest man just jumped out of the plane with my backpack.”

“Our world is full of smart people jumping out of planes with backpacks. One of the paradoxes of faith and doubt is that it is the ultimate intellectual challenge, yet simple and uneducated people may live with great wisdom and PhDs may choose folly. One thing is for sure: sooner or later the plane is going down.

“We all are on the same plane. Smart guys and Boys Scouts alike: everybody has to jump. Everybody has to choose a parachute. No one will know who chose wisely until after they jump.”

Faith & Doubt, Zondervan, 2008. Reprinted *Know Doubt*, 2014.

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